

Railways strengthens Vidarbha's rail network through multiple infrastructure projects

Gauge conversion, new railway lines and capacity augmentation works underway to improve connectivity in Akola, Amravati, Yavatmal and Wardha

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The Ministry of Railways is undertaking gauge conversion and capacity augmentation projects across the Vidarbha region to improve rail connectivity in the districts of Akola, Amravati, Yavatmal and Wardha. Several gauge conversion projects, new railway lines and surveys are at various stages of implementation.

The status of metre gauge and narrow gauge railway sections passing through the districts of Akola, Amravati, Yavatmal and Wardha is as follows:

SN	Name of the section	Status
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1.	Ratlam – Mhow – Khandwa – Akola (473 Km) Metre gauge section	This section has been sanctioned for Gauge conversion. Ratlam – Patalpani (144 Km), Omkareshwar Road – Tukaithad (132 Km) and Akola – Akot Section (43 Km) i.e. total 319 Km have been commissioned. Details of work in balance section is as under:- 242 Ha Land has been acquired out of a total scope of 320 Ha. 5 out of 41 Major Bridges (including 1 important bridge) have been completed and work has been taken up in the balance bridges. Work of Earthwork and Formation has been taken up. Station Buildings' work has been taken up in 7 Stations.
2.	Murtizapur – Yavatmal NG Section (112 Km)	The narrow gauge railway line was constructed in 1916-17 and was operational till 2017. At present, trains are not operated on this Section. DPR has been prepared for gauge conversion.
3.	Murtizapur – Achalpur NG Section (77 Km)	The narrow gauge railway line was constructed in 1916-17 and was operational till 2019. At present, trains are not operated on this Section. DPR has been prepared for gauge conversion.
4.	Pulgaon – Arvi NG Section (35 Km)	The narrow-gauge railway line was constructed in 1916-17 and was operational till 2008. At present, trains are not operated on this Section. Final Location Survey (FLS) for gauge conversion has been sanctioned for preparation of DPR.

The Ministry stated that the Murtizapur–Yavatmal, Murtizapur–Achalpur and Pulgaon–Arvi narrow gauge lines are more than 100 years old and their assets and infrastructure have deteriorated significantly. Operations on these sections were discontinued due to safety considerations and the need for renewal of overaged assets.

These three Narrow gauge lines were constructed by M/s Central Province Railway Company Limited i.e. CPRCL and were under operation through two agreements executed on 27.03.1916 & 03.10.1917 between Indian Railways (represented by the then Secretary of State) and CPRCL.

The land ownership lies with Railways as per clause 5 of the contract and planned to be used for gauge conversion. Central Railway has approved determination of contract in 2022 as CPRCL failed to maintain/provide funds for rehabilitation of the badly deteriorated infrastructure. The determination of the contract has been challenged by CPRCL. Hon'ble High Court has appointed the Arbitrator on 28.03.2024 and Arbitration proceedings are in progress at present.

To further improve connectivity in Akola, Buldhana, Amravati, Yavatmal and Wardha districts of the Vidarbha region, the following projects have been taken up:

SN	Name of the Project	Status
1.	Wardha – Nanded New Line (284 Km)	The Project has been sanctioned at a cost of ₹5,248 crore. Wardha – Deoli – Kalamb Section (38 Km) has been commissioned. Work has been taken up in the balance section. 1338 Ha Land acquisition has been completed out of a total scope of 1974 Ha. 93 Major Bridges (including 2 important Bridge) have been completed out of a total scope of 136 Bridges. 25 ROBs have been completed out of a total scope of 50 ROBs. An expenditure of ₹4,802 crore has been incurred upto March, 2026 with an Outlay of ₹820 crore for the year 2026-27.
2.	Bhusawal – Wardha 3rd & 4th Line (314 Km)	The project has been sanctioned recently at a cost of ₹9,197.
3.	Wardha – Balharshah 4th Line (135 Km)	The project has been sanctioned recently at a cost of ₹2,226.
4	Jalna – Khamgaon New Line (162 Km)	DPR has been prepared.

After preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR), sanctioning of project requires consultation with various stake-holders including State

After preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR), sanctioning of project requires consultation with various stake-holders including State Governments and necessary approvals viz. appraisal of NITI Aayog, Ministry of Finance etc. As sanctioning of projects is a continuous and dynamic process, exact timelines depend upon appraisals and approvals by various stakeholders.

This information was given by the Union Minister for Railways, Information & Broadcasting and Electronics & Information Technology, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, in a written reply in the Lok Sabha today.

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